Archives

Extension at Work

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Thirty-Ninth Annual Report
University of Maryland Extension Service
College Park, Maryland

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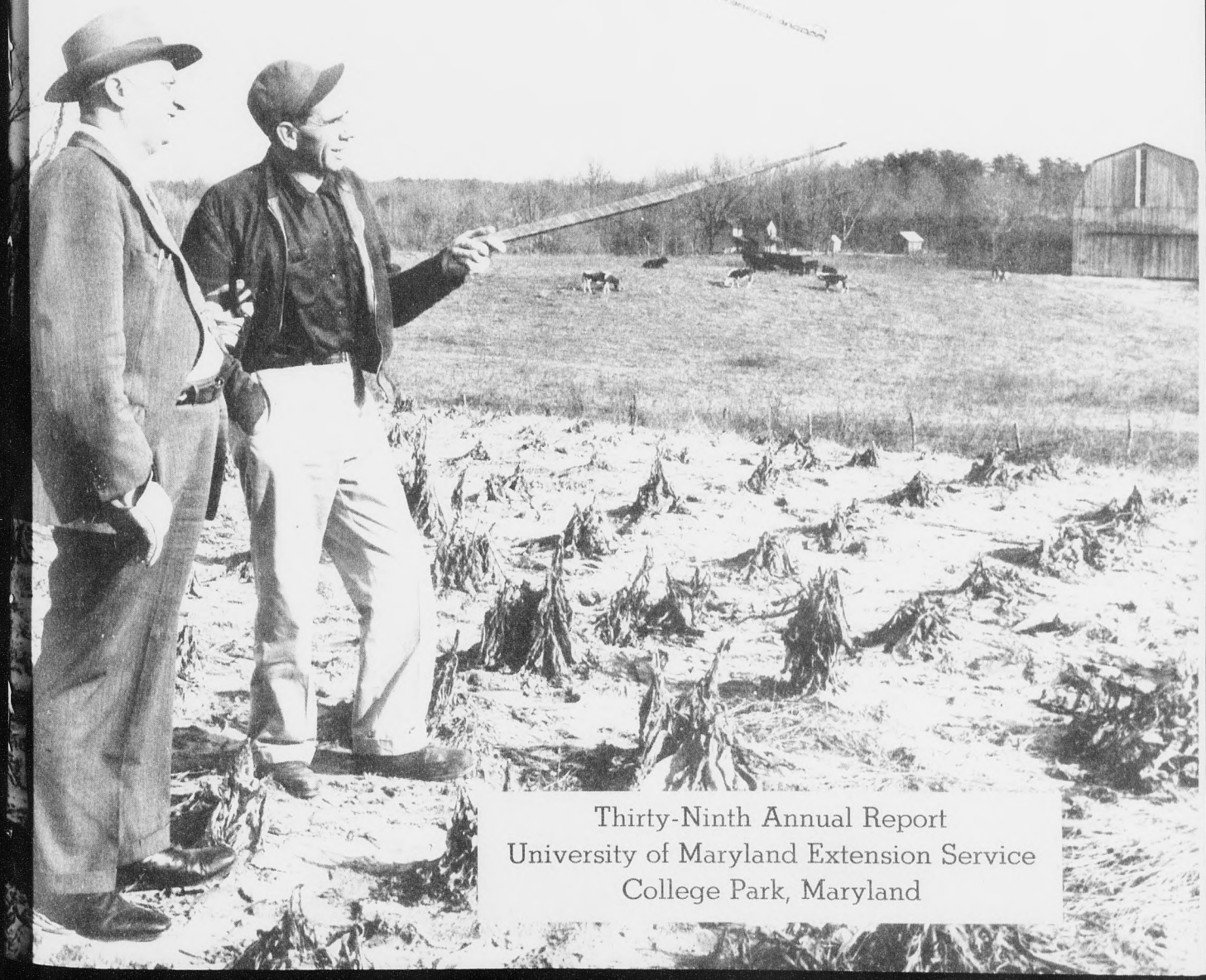

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Extension at Work

DURING 1953, the Maryland Extension Service had more calls from farm people and had more contacts with farmers, homemakers and youth than in any previous year in its 39-year history.

There are a number of reasons why this was true. The margin between the price the farmer received for his products and the cost of his production have become so narrow, that only by the utmost efficiency in feeding, management and other production practices, has the farmer been able to come out ahead.

This "close" situation has meant greater dependence by farmers upon agricultural research to find better methods and greater reliance upon Extension work to demonstrate these more efficient methods.

And, as the years have gone by, Extension workers have become more proficient in their job of reaching people. Methods of teaching and demonstrating by Extension workers have also been greatly improved, allowing them to reach more people for the time or dollar spent.

Each Maryland county now has a county agricultural agent and a home demonstration agent, financed in part by appropriations from the county boards of commissioners. Nearly all counties have assistants to work with 4-H clubs and some have Negro Extension agents to work with our Negro people.

This county staff of 95 people, assisted by Extension specialists at the College of Agriculture at the University of Maryland, met face to face, talked with them on the telephone, mailed a bulletin to them or otherwise "influenced for the betterment of agriculture or homemaking," 22,618 farm families of the 36,107 farm families of the state.

In other words, Extension reached two out of three Maryland farm families.

In reaching two farm families of each three, the Extension workers made 29,900 visits to farms or homes, met 58,316 office callers, answered 103,998 telephone calls and distributed 121,297 copies of bulletins. The Extension workers conducted or participated in 13,487 meetings with a total attendance of 745,318.

In the following pages we show you some of these activities of Extension workers. It is a report of *Extension at Work.*

James M. Gwin

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Director

Problems and Headaches

Vernon Richardson, right, has many questions to ask of County Agent P. E. Clark

WHEN VERNON RICHARDSON bought his 670-acre farm near Aquasco in southern Prince Georges county, he got a lot of problems and headaches along with it.

Both soil and buildings were badly run down. He made the house and two tenant houses livable, repaired the two tobacco barns, and built five new barns. Only 50 acres of cropland were in active use and all had grown tobacco for generations.

There were about 300 acres of land on the place which lay good enough to farm but much of it had not been used in recent years, some of it for as long as 25 years. Brush, weeds, and gullies were everywhere.

Mr. Richardson soon found that he couldn't take care of a big tobacco acreage by himself even with modern equipment. Nor could he get or keep the help he needed to raise enough tobacco to make the best use of the investment in tobacco land and the seven tobacco barns.

It seemed to the new owner that cutting the tobacco acreage to a size he could care for and devoting the rest of the farm to beef cattle and grain crops was the most logical solution.

Such a program posed many other problems. Two of the most pertinent were: (1) Getting the land into shape to grow crops and grass; and (2) How about the tobacco acreage allotment?

The size of a farm's tobacco allotment is determined by number of acres grown over several years. The farm's allotment was 42 acres. If he cut his acreage back to a fraction of that amount and the allotment system became permanent, he would have a hard time getting the high allotment back. And tobacco is a very high dollar-producing crop.

In other words, Mr. Richardson couldn't keep up his tobacco acreage and he couldn't afford to gamble with letting it go.

At his request, County Agent P. E. Clark and Assistant Agent Merle Howes visited the farm several times and later called in the Extension agronomist at the University of Maryland.

Land use capability maps prepared by the Soil Conservation Service showed that there were more than 300 acres which could be used for cropland.

Mr. Richardson collected soil samples which were sent into the Agronomy department under the soil testing service arrangement. These were analyzed to learn the lime and fertility needs of the various fields.

The Extension workers helped Mr. Richardson work out a five-year program for the farm under which 20 to 50 acres of tobacco could be grown under two and three-year rotations to maintain fertility.

They recommended other crops, including 70 acres of corn, 80 acres of wheat, 20 acres of clover hay, 80 acres of lespedeza and 60 acres in permanent pasture grass such as orchard grass, lespedeza and fescue.

The program they outlined would let him keep a 20 to 30 cow beef herd, sell some cash crops, and maintain as big a tobacco acreage as labor supply would allow.

Many technical problems cropped up. Legumes were badly needed to build up soil fertility and provide livestock feed. To grow legumes, lime is necessary.

But there is danger of getting so much lime in the soil that it will increase the danger of tobacco root diseases.

The best way to get around such a situation, the agronomists advised Mr. Richardson, is to lime immediately following the tobacco crop, then grow the grain and legume crops, following with tobacco on the field the third year.

There is still a long way to go to work out all the problems on the farm. The plan was not worked out and presented to Mr. Richardson —the Extension workers showed him the difficulties and suggested alternatives. He is working out his own solutions after he has the facts.

It isn't possible for a county agent to visit every farm in his county, but there are many problems, such as those of Mr. Richardson's, that can't be handled from the office. To give real help, the county agent must go to the farm. Maryland county agents made 29,900 of these farm visits in 1953.

Extension at Work

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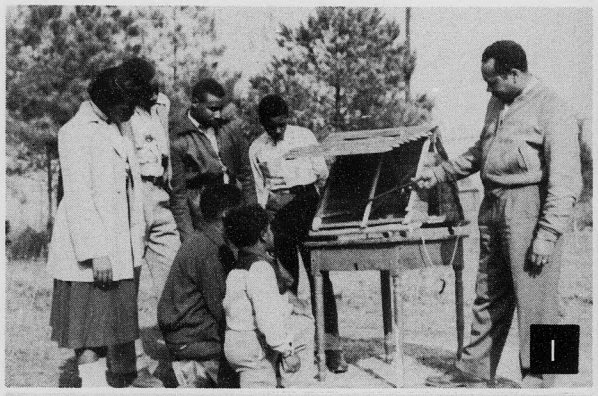
Demonstrating 'How To Do'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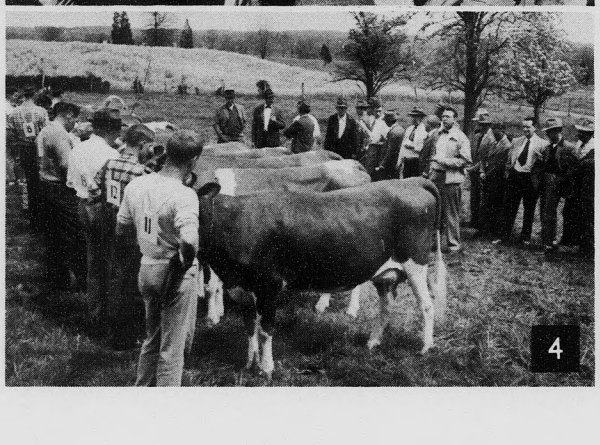
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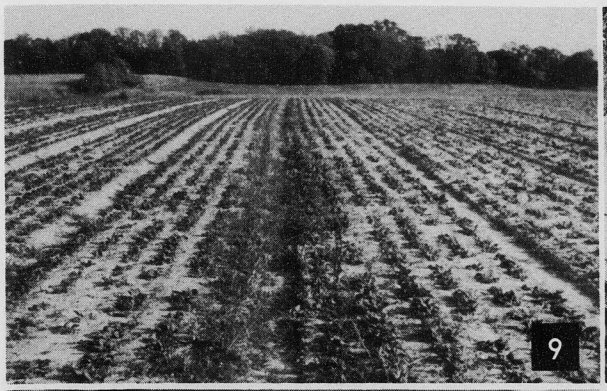
Demonstrating The Results



1. Ryland Holmes, St. Marys county Negro agent, shows how to build a low cost A-type hog house. 2. Caroline tomato growers learn that this conveyer developed by the University of Maryland ups harvesting efficiency 37 percent. 3. Proper plow adjustment does a better job at less cost. 4. Extensioner shows "What is a good dairy cow?" 5. Garrett county homemakers learn care and minor repair of their electrical equipment. 6. Poultry dealers learn better methods of preparing birds for sale. 7. Extension horticulturist shows group at the Sherwood farm near Towson how to prune tall trees. 8. Learning how to make Christmas decorations for fun and profit in the Towson Legion Hall. 9. Spray controls weeds in spinach for Ridgely Todd, Sparrows Point. Note unsprayed rows in center. 10. Clem Dyson, right, St. Marys county, is convinced that extra fertilization of corn pays. 11. A. F. Vierheller, fruit specialist, right, shows Hermon Todd, Montgomery county orchardist, that mice are killing his trees. 12. Nathan Childs, left, Anne Arundel county, is well satisfied with the new Sunnyside sweet potato introduced into the county by County Agent Stanley Day. 13. Dr. R. S. Rothgeb (in baseball cap) explains variety demonstrations on plot on Willis Farm, Inc., Talbot county. The tour was organized by R. S. Brown, county agent. 14. Raymond Mueller, Cecil county agent, left, and Ernest Cullen demonstrate that sidedressing pays, sometimes 40 extra dollars per acre.

Demonstrating 'How To Do'

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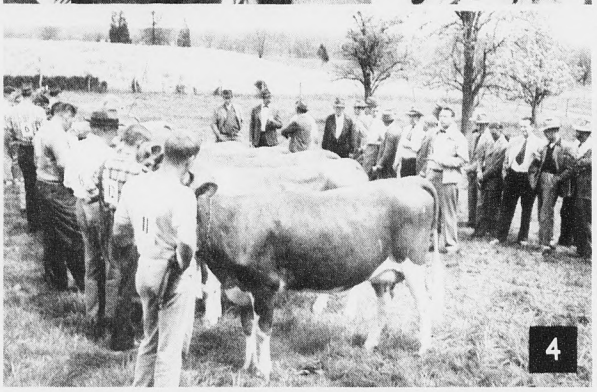
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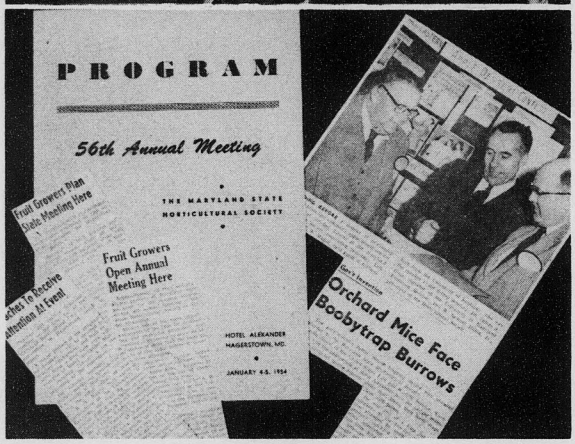
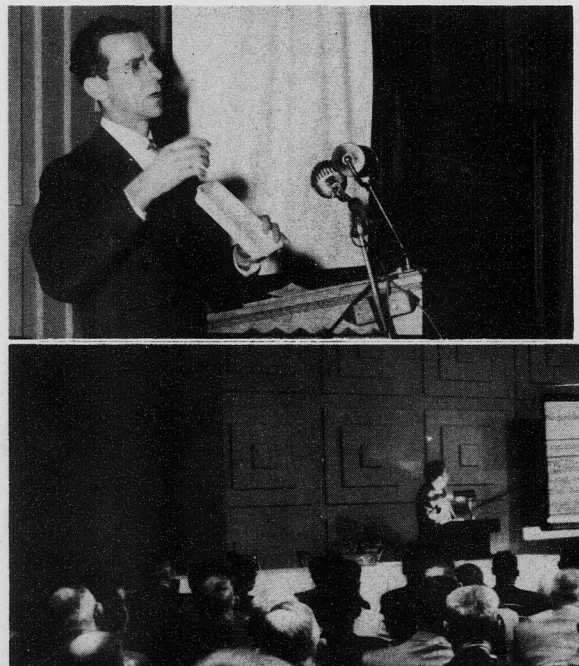


Good meetings, good attendance and good programs don't "just happen." Planning the meeting are, left to right, D. T. Walker, Mt. Airy; E. D. McCain, Frederick; W. Lee Allen, Salisbury; A. F. Vierheller, Extension; President R. S. Dillon, Hancock; W. C. Main, Hagerstown; Norman J. Fike, Cordova; S. D. Waddell, New Windsor; Lloyd Balderson, Colora; I. C. Haut, University of Maryland Experiment Station Director. Publicity, well distributed, promoted attendance.



The Extension Meeting

FARMER'S MEETINGS in which a group gathers to discuss agricultural problems, hear lectures and watch demonstrations on new agricultural methods, are an important cog in the big wheel of Extension adult education.

Many of these meetings are arranged by the county Extension agents. Frequently, specialists from the College of Agriculture are invited to lecture or demonstrate on their speciality.

The Maryland Extension Service conducted 13,487 meetings in 1953 and the number of persons attending reached the astounding total of 145,318, involving a sizeable portion of the rural population.

Besides the "little meetings," about 25 statewide agricultural organizations held annual meetings. The Extension staff works with these groups and cooperates by planning and presenting educational lectures or demonstrations.

Typical was the annual meeting of the Maryland Horticultural Society, held each winter in Hagerstown, the center of the apple and peach growing section. About 300 farmers attended.

A. F. Vierheller, Extension horticulturist, has been secretary of this organization for the past 25 years. After meeting with the officers of the association and with Mark Miller, Washington county agent, to learn the needs of the group, Mr. Vierheller arranged an educational program.

Fruit production and marketing specialists, entomologists, and plant pathologists from the University reported on the latest findings in this fast-changing field.

At left, H. H. Hoecker, marketing specialist, explains handling and marketing tree-ripened peaches for greater returns to the grower. Below: Dr. L. O. Weaver, plant pathologist, uses lantern slides to tell of new chemicals for orchard spraying.

(Above) Miss Nell Grim, home demonstration agent of Wicomico county, shows members of the Rockawalkin Homemakers club some new wrinkles in home furnishing ideas, using a slide projector and colored pictures.

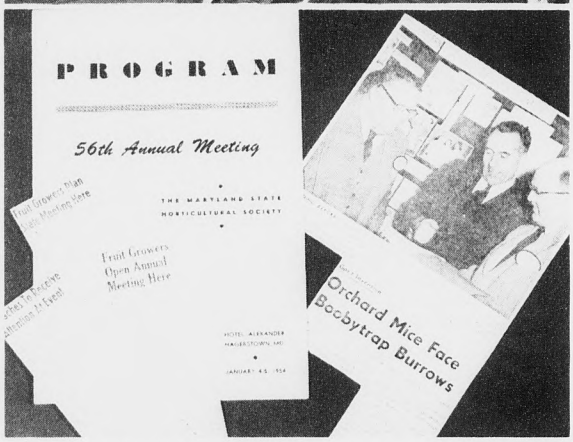
Maryland Extension workers have found this visual aid an effective way of showing new ideas. Nearly every county Extension office has a camera and other equipment needed to bring this type of teaching to farmers and homemakers.

Colored slides are particularly useful in home furnishings work since they show the importance of color and the results in room settings. Storage, arrangement of furniture, remodeling rooms, refinishing furniture, home lighting, table setting, flower arrangement and hooked rugs have been made into separate series by the specialists for loan to county home demonstration agents.

(Below at left) Following directions in the Extension bulletin, "You Can Make Slip Covers," Mrs. J. B. Mulder and Mrs. Thatcher Edmonds, Talbot county, demonstrate making slip covers to members of the Cross Roads Homemakers club.

(Below at right) Mrs. Mulder and Mrs. Thatcher admire the completed slip cover.

Printed publications are among the oldest, most important, and most effective teaching tools used by Extension workers. During 1953, the Maryland Extension Service published 269,400 copies of 66 different titles of publications on agricultural and home economics topics. In addition, 63,000 copies of U. S. Department of Agriculture publications were secured and distributed to Maryland citizens.


PROGRAM
56th Annual Meeting
THE MARYLAND STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
Fruit Growers Open Annual Meeting Here
Orchard Mice Face Boobytrap Burrows

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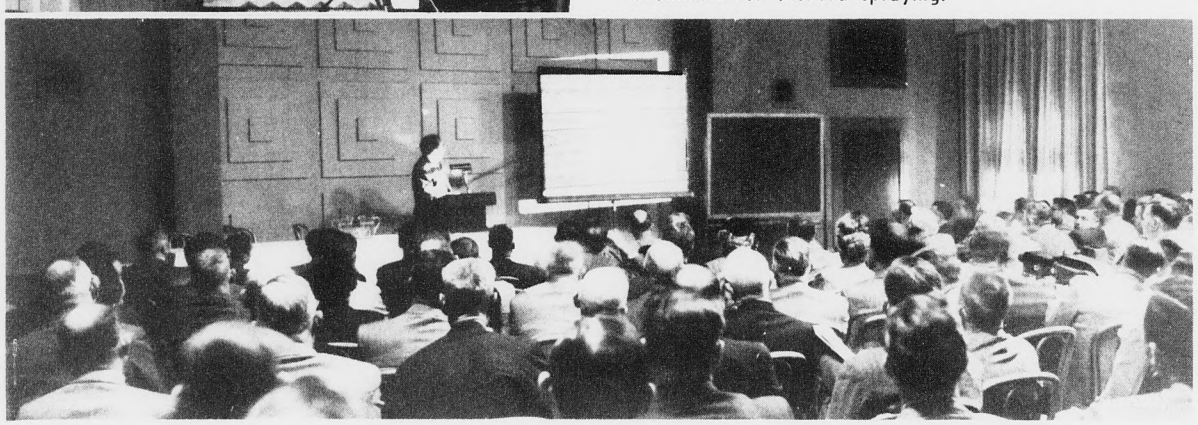

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(Above) County Agent W. G. Myers, left, discusses their feeding problem with farmer George H. Wehland and his son, Robert, in the Extension office in Ellicott City. Showing a model of a trench silo on display in his office, Mr. Myers suggests that it might solve the problem. **(Below, Left)** The county agent takes Mr. Wehland to see how the trench silo is working out on a neighbor's farm. **(Center)** Convinced they should try it, they discuss where to locate it. The county agent points out that it should be handy to the barn and well-drained. **(Right)** This location on a sidehill among the trees meets all requirements. Mr. Wehland figures his silo saved him $2,500 the first year.

Cutting Feed Costs

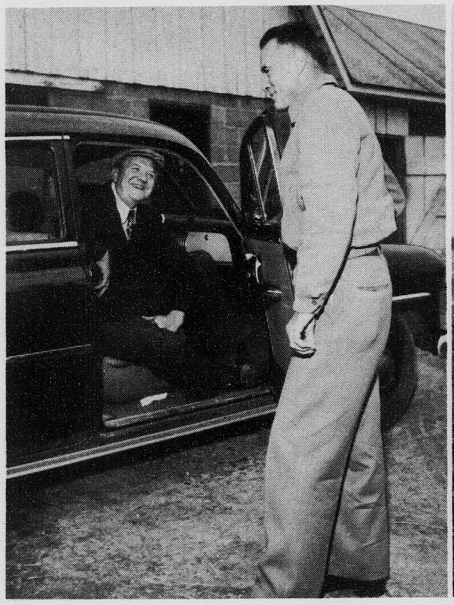
Howard county now has more than 100 trench silos. But before 1949, there wasn't a single one. Many of the county's dairy farmers had trouble like George Wehland and his son Robert who had to buy 50 to 100 tons of hay a year.

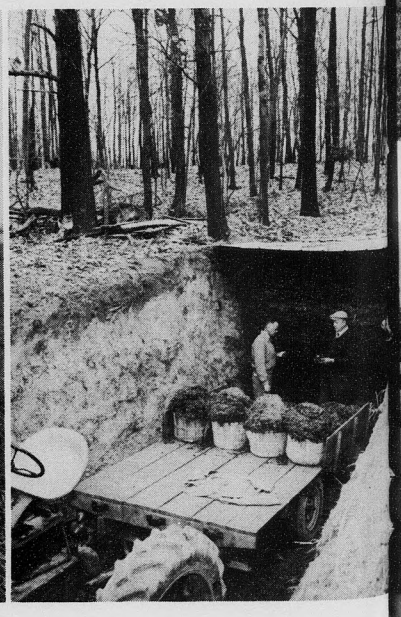
County Agent W. G. Myers became interested in trench silos as a possible solution to the feed problems of his farmers. At his recommendation, Vernon Bandel and Lawton Sharp built two of the first. The silos worked out so well that many other farmers followed their example.

Looking for a solution to their feed problem, the Wehlands came to Mr. Myers. He showed them what a trench silo would do for them and took them to see some of those already in use. As a result, a 300-ton trench was built on the Wehland farm for about $90.

Also at the county agent's suggestion, they have filled it with a silage mixture made from sorghum and soybeans, a very high protein silage. About nine acres was enough. There has been practically no loss through spoilage.

The silo cut hay consumption about 35 percent and instead of buying hay each year the Wehlands now have hay to sell.



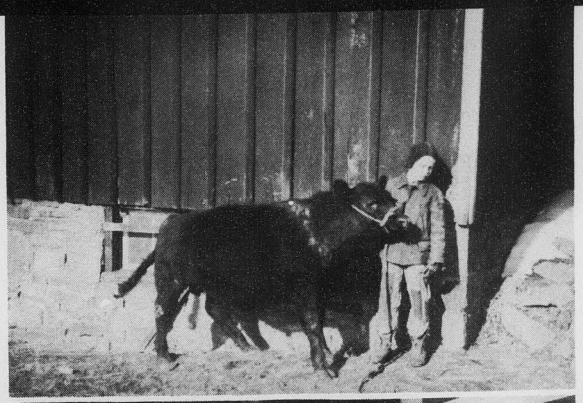


Boy Becomes A Man

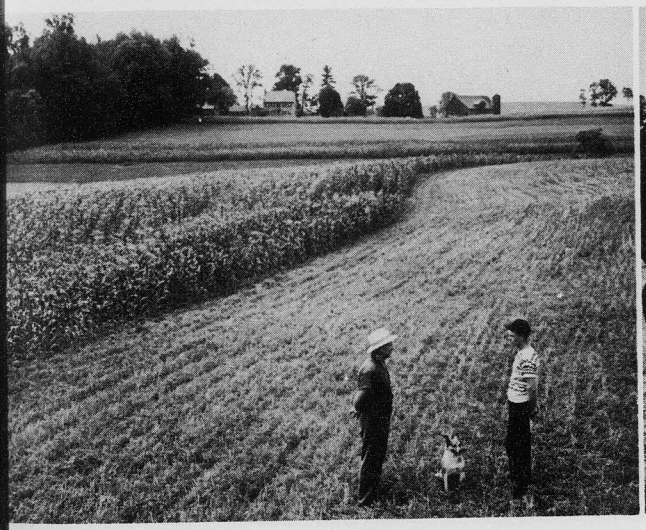
Henry S. Holloway of Darlington in Harford county is the kind of a boy who would have probably turned out to be a young man of much promise anyway, but 10 years of 4-H projects certainly helped.

He has learned a lot about the business of farming from his club work.

But more important, he has developed into the kind of good citizen the Nation needs. Maryland 4-H membership in 1953 was 14,380 boys and girls.



Henry's first calf, Michael, was purchased in 1942 when Henry was 10. He still has the record book showing Michael's cost and the cost of what he ate. The book in boyish pencil scrawl states, "My Angus did not win any prize money." **(Right)** Henry was growing much better Angus ten 4-H years later. **(Below)** Henry's work helping his father establish conservation practices on their farm helped him become a National 4-H Soil Conservation winner. Henry, now 21, has a nice Angus herd.



"Going out to see" is one of the most effective ways of learning new farming methods. These men are touring the Max Covington farm near Davidsonville in Anne Arundel county. County agents and Extension agronomists are pointing out the need of a cover crop on this field to stop erosion over the winter. This type of a "tour" method has proved interesting and is used extensively.

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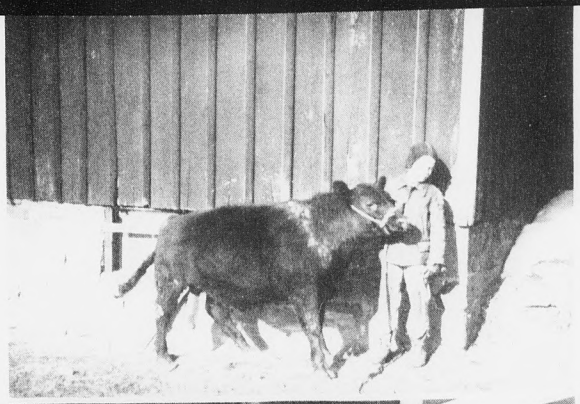
(Above) County Agent W. G. Myers, left, discusses their feeding problem with farmer George H. Wehland and his son, Robert, in the Extension office in Ellicott City. Showing a model of a trench silo on display in his office, Mr. Myers suggests that it might solve the problem. **(Below, Left)** The county agent takes Mr. Wehland to see how the trench silo is working out on a neighbor's farm. **(Center)** Convinced they should try it, they discuss where to locate it. The county agent points out that it should be handy to the barn and well-drained. **(Right)** This location on a sidehill among the trees meets all requirements. Mr. Wehland figures his silo saved him $2,500 the first year.

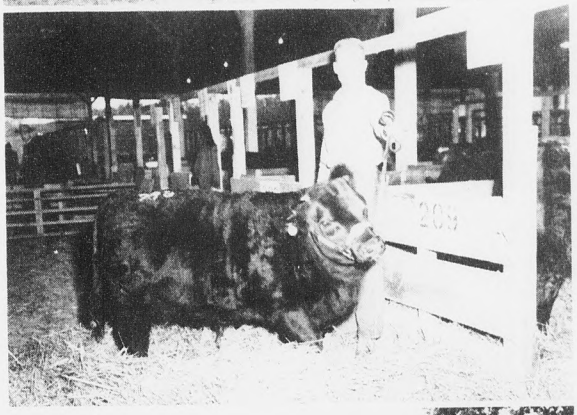
Boy Becomes A Man

Henry S. Holloway of Darlington in Harford county is the kind of a boy who would have probably turned out to be a young man of much promise anyway, but 10 years of 4-H projects certainly helped.

He has learned a lot about the business of farming from his club work.

But more important, he has developed into the kind of good citizen the Nation needs. Maryland 4-H membership in 1953 was 14,380 boys and girls.





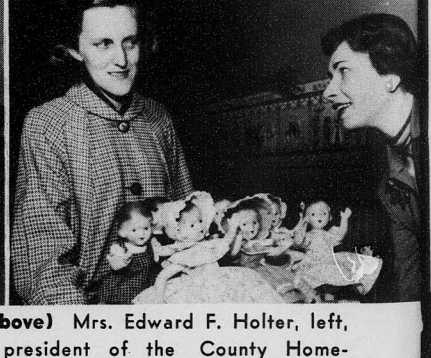
Henry's first calf, Michael, was purchased in 1942 when Henry was 10. He still has the record book showing Michael's cost and the cost of what he ate. The book in boyish pencil scrawl states, "My Angus did not win any prize money." **(Right)** Henry was growing much better Angus ten 4-H years later. **(Below)** Henry's work helping his father establish conservation practices on their farm helped him become a National 4-H Soil Conservation winner. Henry, now 21, has a nice Angus herd.

"Going out to see" is one of the most effective ways of learning new farming methods. These men are touring the Max Covington farm near Davidsonville in Anne Arundel county. County agents and Extension agronomists are pointing out the need of a cover crop on this field to stop erosion over the winter. This type of a "tour" method has proved interesting and is used extensively.

(Above) The Frederick agents feel that getting out in the field is the best way to do Extension work. They made 1,663 farm visits during 1953.

At top, Agent Shoemaker discusses a dairy feeding problem with Walter J. Hahn in his barn near Frederick . . . Harold Roderuck stops Roy Cassell in his barnyard on a 4-H problem. Mr. Roderuck was a member himself 1937-42 and a leader the past 11 years . . . It requires demonstrational material, projectors and other equipment to conduct a good meeting. Miss Lovington is taking off for one of the 69 training meetings for youth held during 1953.

(Above) County Agent Shoemaker, right, advises Norman Lease on a pasture renovation problem. In 1953, there were 4,400 office callers—one each half hour all year . . . Correspondence is important in reaching the public. Much of it is dictated to Secretary Mary Alice Burrier . . . Mrs. Jack McGolerick, left, New Market, came for program books for her club meeting. Secretary Shirley Schachtner hands out the books . . . Assisting the 1,553 4-H boys and girls is rewarding activity. Assistant Agent Roy Cassell, left, helps Holmes Baker plan for Mr. Baker's Unionville club. Mr. Baker has led this 35-member club 10 years.



(Above) Mrs. Edward F. Holter, left, is president of the County Homemakers Council which decides the program. Home Demonstration Agent Beatrice Fehr is outlining what Extension can offer . . . Mrs. Sterling Spurrier, Libertytown, center, county food project leader, prepares a demonstration in the Extension conference room. The agents assist her . . . Richard Keller, Middletown, wants a bulletin. The office distributed 4,948 bulletins in 1953 . . . Mrs. Joel Koehl, left, is leader of the Shookstown 4-H Club. Her girls dressed these dolls for distribution by the Salvation Army to under-privileged children. Assistant Agent Lovington at right, was in charge.

Showing the Way

The Frederick county Extension staff is headed by Henry R. Shoemaker who has been county agent since 1926. Raised on a Montgomery county farm, he is an agricultural graduate from the University of Maryland.

Miss Beatrice Fehr is home demonstration agent and Betsy J. Lovington, is assistant home demonstration agent in charge of girl's 4-H work. Roy D. Cassell, assistant to Mr. Shoemaker, is in charge of boys 4-H work. All office together, where they have a large conference room equipped with a kitchen for foods demonstrations. Two office secretaries complete the staff.

Since about three-fourths of the income of the county's 2,977 farms comes from dairy, efficient milk production and production of feed crops are stressed in the Extension program.

The 33 organized homemaker's clubs with 1,040 members carried the bulk of the adult Extension work for women. These clubs met monthly for nine months, with each meeting devoted to a demonstration of a major phase of homemaking—foods and nutrition, clothing, home furnishings, family life or home management. Project leaders, trained by the home demonstration agents, conduct these demonstrations.

Frederick county tackled a major nutrition problem—weight control—as one of their projects. As a result of one lesson in all clubs in May, two members came to the September meeting wearing dresses two sizes smaller. One hundred sixty-five women reported changing their weight toward normal, 114 losing weight, 51 gaining. In all 1,427 families were assisted or influenced in changing some of their practices to the better.

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Frederick county is known for the progressiveness of its farm families. The latest and best in agricultural methods, crops and livestock are quickly adopted. The sound Extension program has shown the way to progress.

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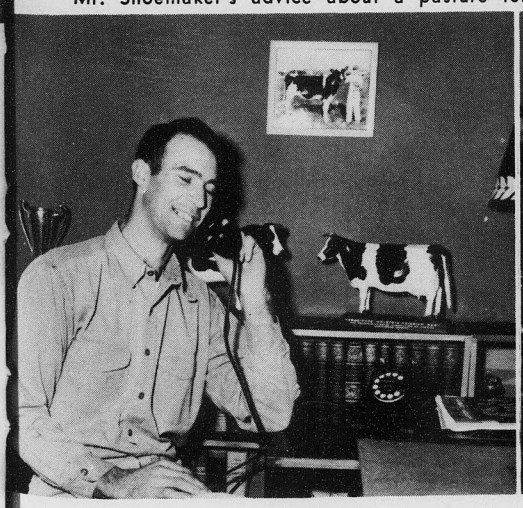

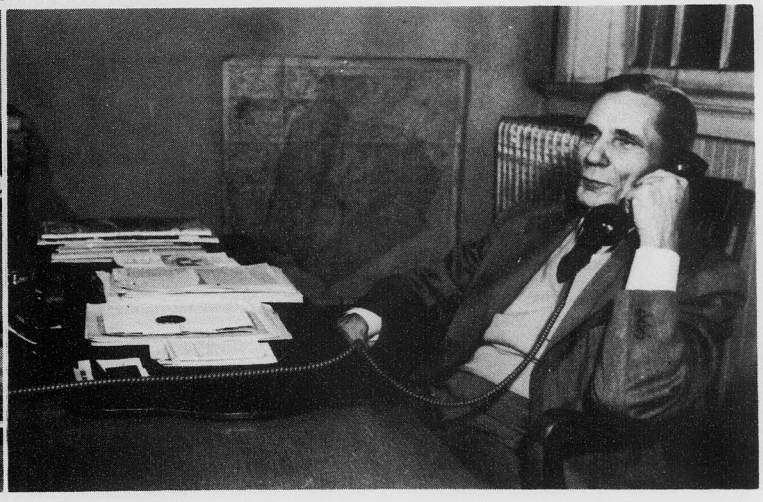

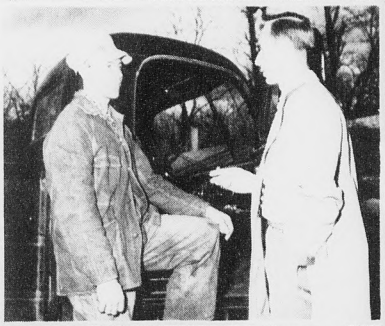

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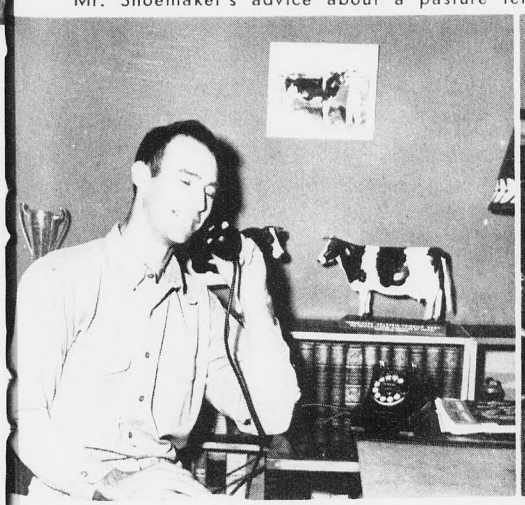

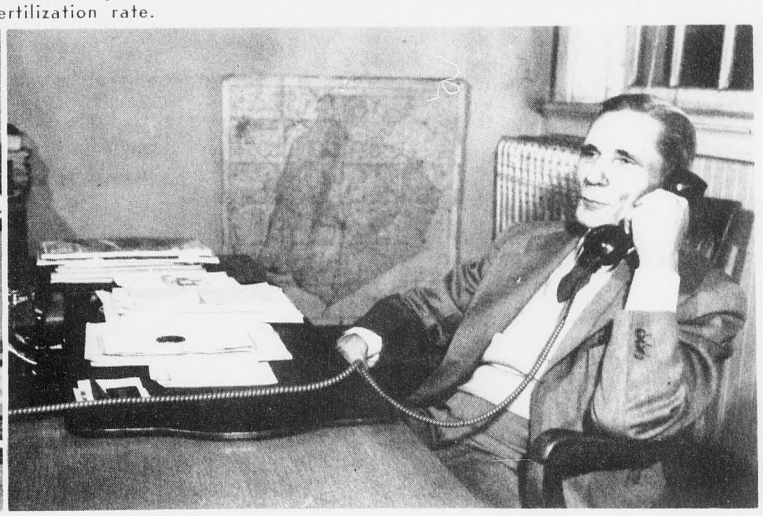

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